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Munch

The Arts Council 1964

The graphic work of **Edvard Munch** 1863-1944

Foreword

This exhibition has been brought to Britain by the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, and we are happy that it is to be taken over by the Arts Council to be shown in England after being seen here during the Edinburgh Festival and a short subsequent period.

In 1932 the Society of Scottish Artists organized the first exhibition of paintings by Munch in Britain, where his importance has continued to be strangely minimized. It is often forgotten that Munch's painting *The Cry*, perhaps the classic example of visual expressionism, was executed in 1893, the year Gauguin began *Noa-Noa*. The year after, Munch turned to making prints, and the earliest examples in the exhibition date from this year, 1894. The art of extraordinary intensity to be seen in the exhibition thus emerges directly from the cauldron of advanced European art in the eighteen-eighties and nineties. We have become accustomed to the idea of an art of anxiety. The anxieties Munch was subject to were of a more private nature, but he was uniquely able to give them a generalized expression which generates creative sympathy.

The exhibition has been made available by the Authorities of the Oslo Municipal Art Collection, which is the repository of the vast wealth of paintings and prints bequeathed by Munch to the City of Oslo on his death in 1944. We are grateful to the Oslo Authorities and to Mr Johan H. Langaard, the Director, for their kindness in allowing the exhibition to be sent here so soon after the opening of the new Munch Museum which has been built in Oslo to house this marvellous collection.

Douglas Hall

Keeper, Scottish National
Gallery of Modern Art

The exhibition will be shown at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh,
from 15 August – 15 September, 1964.

Acknowledgements

The Arts Council is indebted to the authorities of the Oslo Municipal Art Collection and Mr Johan Langaard, the Director, for making this collection of Munch's graphic work so readily available and allowing it to be toured by the Arts Council for four months after the Edinburgh showing. We are also most grateful to Mr Douglas Hall, Keeper of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, on whose initiative this exhibition has come to Britain, and both Mr Halvard Saether and Mr Dagfinn Austad, cultural attachés to the Royal Norwegian Embassy, for their close co-operation and help. We should also like to thank Mrs Norah McCullough of the National Gallery of Canada who has kindly allowed us to reprint her introduction, which she wrote for the exhibition when it recently visited Canada.
G.W.

The exhibition will visit the following places:

York, City Art Gallery,
26 September – 17 October

Folkestone, The New Metropole Art Centre
31 October – 21 November

Bristol, City Art Gallery,
28 November – 26 December

Lincoln, Usher Art Gallery,
2 – 23 January, 1965

The graphic art of Edvard Munch

The art of Edvard Munch had its beginnings in a sombre household, and its tone was set by a pessimistic society towards the end of the nineteenth century. Born in 1863, Munch was reared in Oslo. As a small child he experienced the loss of his mother and later a young sister, both struck down with tuberculosis. His father sought solace from these family tragedies in religion but with such intensity that a further shadow was cast over the home. The anxieties that darkened Munch's early life were frequently recalled as subjects for the work of his maturity. Both the etching and the lithograph entitled *The Sick Girl* (his sister Sophie who had died at the age of fourteen), and the woodcut *Old Man Praying* are examples that hark back to childhood memories.

When Munch was seventeen he was sent to study at the State School of Art and Handcrafts in Oslo. Following his student days, Munch flung himself into the life of the young intellectuals, Ibsen and Bjørnson were the prophetic voices in Scandinavia, and the writings of Zola had also made a strong impression there. Throughout Europe a stand was being taken by the intellectuals against the established moral, social and political codes. Munch was involved in this ferment and his coterie was presently 'Christiania's Bohemians', after the title of a biographical novel by Hans Jaeger published in 1885, considered so scandalous it was suppressed by the puritanical authorities. Munch recorded both the personalities and episodes of this association and his bohemian experiences reappeared in the graphic art of 1895-6, and again much later on in his mature years. The etching *Tête-à-tête*, included in this exhibition, is an example.

From 1885, Munch was in Paris several times and at first produced canvases in an impressionist manner. But he was seeking a way of presenting his ideas with less emphasis on atmosphere and more on emotional impact. He adapted to his purpose something of the flat colour patterns and sinuous line that Gauguin used. While in Paris in 1889, Munch wrote in his note book a statement that indicated his growing independence of trends and the direction his art was now to take: 'No longer should you paint interiors with men reading and women sitting. There must be living beings who breathe and feel and love and suffer.'

Like his contemporaries, Munch was preoccupied with the physical and emotional hazards that beset life. He felt himself threatened by insanity, and his unhappy relationships with women were revealed again and again in his art, especially in the graphic works. He employed a certain amount of symbolism, literally expressed as in the etching *Adam and Eve* with the apple of temptation, or implied as in the *Vampire* in which the woman ensnares the man in her arms with her hair.

Munch spent highly productive years in Germany from 1892 to 1908, with two winter intervals in Paris. He exhibited frequently in Germany, winning support from German cultural circles. He found this intellectual climate stimulating, and he began printmaking in 1894. Within two years he had produced fifty prints, with much experimentation in different techniques. His etching was fairly traditional on the whole and it remained his favourite portrait medium. During his winter visits to Paris, Munch turned to lithography and the woodcut, achieving new ways of manipulating these media. The lithographic stone offered him a more generous scale than etching, and permitted him to stress the emotional content by means of rich blacks and sweeping rhythms close in manner to his painting. These lithographs were printed by the master craftsman, Clot of Paris. It is likely that Munch saw at Clot's shop some of the colour lithographs of Toulouse-Lautrec and other French artists. By 1897, Munch had made forty lithographs including his *Self-Portrait, The Death Chamber* and *Jealousy*.

The woodcut provided Munch with the opportunity of simplifying his forms in order to retain only the absolute essence of the idea as found in the prints *Summer Night* and *Evening* (*Melancholy by the Shore*). Munch had observed how Gauguin exploited the wood grain of his blocks (a Japanese technique) and he too used the natural surface textures. He did his own printing for his woodcuts and was able to combine and alter colours for different proofs as he pleased. His own method of using the woodcut as a subtle yet powerfully expressive medium led to a whole fresh concept of its possibilities by European artists.

Unfortunately, Munch collapsed in 1908 and after treatment for his nervous disorders at Copenhagen for some months, he decided to return to Norway. Back in Oslo, Munch regained his health and continued with his productive life, painting many portraits, landscapes and figure groups. His reputation had grown, with increasing demand for his work. However, he resisted parting with his paintings because he had become absorbed in developing one composition from another. The most notable of these related works were the murals for Oslo University, 1914, conceived as a complement to an earlier project, *The Frieze of Life*, commenced before 1890 when sections of it were much criticized.

It is usual to link Munch with the German expressionist movement. Munch cleared the way for the realization of painting that was chiefly concerned with emotional communication in which the form derived from the theme. Like Munch, the German expressionists owed much to French art of the late nineteenth century, and especially to Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cézanne. At the Cologne international exhibition of 1912, the prototype of the Armory Show in New York the following year, Munch was honoured by a comprehensive showing of his painting. Even so, he himself was aware of the differences between his direction and the advances of expressionism into further abstraction, more elemental forms, and greater intensity of colour. He wrote: 'Here the wildest things in Europe are collected. I am quite faded and classic.' Munch was therefore essentially a forerunner and remained a figurative and landscape painter, with a unique command of colour and form that he employed with great emotional effect.

Munch built himself a studio near Oslo so constructed that he could work out of doors in all weathers and continued to paint vigorously up to a great age. His graphic art served him as one of his main sources of income while his paintings remained stacked against his studio walls where he wanted them for reference. This

great body of his paintings was bequeathed to his native city of Oslo where a public art gallery is being built to house them.*

Norah McCullough

Exhibition Extension Services,
National Gallery of Canada.

*Since this introduction was written the new Munch Museum has now been opened in Oslo.

Biographical note

1863 Born at Engelhaug Farm in Løten, Hedmark, on December 12th.
1880 Entered the Arts and Crafts School in Oslo.
1882-3 Shared studio with a number of other young artists, under the guidance of Christian Krohg.
1883 Made his debut at the Autumn Exhibition with a painting *The Girl on the Bed*.
1885 First visit abroad. Three weeks in Paris.
1886 Painted the first versions of *The Morning After*, *Puberty* and *Sick Girl*.
1889 First one-man show in Oslo, with, *inter alia*, his magnum opus *Spring* and the paintings mentioned above. Was awarded a State art scholarship and spent four months at Léon Bonnat's School of Painting in Paris. Conceived the idea of the *Life Frieze*.
1890 Visited Germany, France and Italy.
1892 Exhibitions in Oslo and Berlin.
1894 Made his first etchings.
1895 Started working with lithographs and woodcuts.
1896-7 Stayed in Paris. Exhibited in the Art Nouveau and the Salon des Independants. Exhibition in Berlin.
1899 The National Gallery, Oslo, purchased *Spring* and the large portrait of *Sister Inger*.
1900-7 Resided mainly in Germany, but spent a part of each summer at the seaside resort of Asgardstrand, in the outer Oslo fjord.
1908-9 Suffered a nervous breakdown, and lived at Dr Jacobsen's clinic in Skodsborg, Denmark.
1910-15 Worked at the Aula decorations at his country place, Skrubben, near Kragerø.
1916 Purchased the Ekely property in Vestre Aker, just outside Oslo.
1922 Painted the pictures for the canteen in the Freia Chocolate Factory, Oslo. Exhibition in Zurich.
1923 Exhibitions in Berlin and Gothenburg.
1927 Exhibitions in Berlin, and in the National Gallery, Oslo.
1937 Exhibition in Stockholm.
1938 Exhibition in Amsterdam.
1944 Died of a stroke on January 23. Bequeathed his property as well as all his works of art and his papers to the Municipality of Oslo. During the postwar years official exhibitions of Edvard Munch's art have been held in New York, London, Brussels, Paris, Cologne, Copenhagen and Newcastle.

Cat. no. **13**

Catalogue

Dimensions are given in centimetres, height before width; those given for etchings indicate the size of the plate.

S numbers refer to the definitive catalogues of Munch's work by Gustave Schiefler: 'Verzeichnis des graphischen Werkes Edvard Munchs bis 1906' (Cassirer, Berlin, 1907) and 'Edvard Munch. Das graphische Werk, 1906-1926' (Euphorion, Berlin, 1927).

Etchings

1 Portrait of a young woman 1894 S2
drypoint 15.8 x 11.9

2 Girl and Death 1894 S3
drypoint 30.5 x 22

3 Vampire 1894 S4
drypoint 29.9 x 22.9

4 At the window 1894 S5
drypoint 22 x 15.7

5 Consolation 1894 S6
drypoint and aquatint 21.7 x 32

6 Sick child 1894 S7
drypoint 39 x 29.3

7 Study of a model 1894/5 S9
drypoint 28.4 x 20.9

8 Christiania Bohemia II 1895 S11
drypoint and aquatint 29.5 x 39.5

9 Tête à tête 1895 S12
etching and drypoint 21.8 x 32.7

10 Bathing women 1895 S14
drypoint and aquatint 22 x 32.2

11 Lovers on the shore II (Attraction) 1895 S18
etching and drypoint 26.8 x 33.3

12 Summer night 1895 S19
drypoint and aquatint 24.9 x 32.6

13 Two people (The lonely ones) 1895 S20
drypoint 16.8 x 22.6

14 The kiss 1895 S22
etching, drypoint and aquatint 34.5 x 27.8

15 Portrait of Dr Max Asch 1895 S27
drypoint 26.5 x 19

16 Reclining nude 1896 S41
mezzotint 21.6 x 29

17 The lovers 1896 S43
mezzotint 21.6 x 28.8

18 Two girls and Death 1896 S44
drypoint 31.4 x 42.6

19 Portrait of Stephane Mallarmé c.1896
soft ground etching 20.0 x 16.0

20 Model in cape and hood 1897 S86
mezzotint 39.8 x 29.5

21 Portrait of Sigbjorn Obstfelder 1897 S88
etching and drypoint 17.9 x 13.7

22 Portrait of Helge Rode 1898 S103
drypoint 27.6 x 20.8

23 Three faces (Tragedy) 1902 S145
mezzotint 29.5 x 39.4

24 Potsdamer Square 1902 S156
aquatint and drypoint 23.8 x 29.7

25 Portrait of Paul Cassirer's daughter 1906 S248
drypoint 39.5 x 29.5

26 The nurse 1908/9 S269
drypoint 20.5 x 15.2

27 Man and horse 1915 S429
soft ground etching 29.5 x 49.4

28 Adam and Eve 1915 S430
etching 26.0 x 37.0

29 Galloping horse 1915 S431
etching 38 x 32.9

30 Breaking up of a ship c.1915/16
soft ground etching 34.0 x 40.0

Lithographs

31 Self portrait 1895 S31
chinese ink and crayon 45.5 x 31.7

32 Madonna 1902 S33b
chinese ink, crayon and scraper 4 colours 44.0 x 34.5

33 Vampire 1895 S34I
38.2 x 54.5

34 Lust 1895 S35
48.0 x 29.0

35 The alley (Carmen) 1895 S36
47.0 x 30.5

36 In the clinic 1896 S55
c.33.0 x 54.0

37 Jealousy II 1896 S58
chinese ink, crayon and scraper c.46.5 x 56.5

38 The sick child 1896 S59b
crayon and chinese ink 42.1 x 56.5

39 The urn 1896 S63
chinese ink and scraper 46.0 x 26.5

Cat. no. **32**

Cat. no. **38**

Cat. no. **33**

40 Attraction I 1896 S65
chinese ink, crayon and scraper 47.2 x 35.5

41 Separation I 1896 S67
chinese ink and crayon 48.8 x 58.5

42 Separation II 1896 S68a
crayon 41.0 x 62.5

43 Death in the sick room 1896 S73
40.0 x 54.0

44 Portrait of Gunnar Heiberg 1896 S75
crayon 45.0 x 42.0

45 Portrait of August Strindberg 1896 S77
61.0 x 46.0

46 Portrait of Sigbjorn Obstfelder 1896 S78
36.0 x 27.5

47 Portrait of Stephane Mallarmé 1896 S79
40.1 x 28.9

48 Funeral March 1897 S94
chinese ink and crayon 55.5 x 37.0

49 Woman and urn 1898 S104
42.0 x 29.0

50 Portrait of Stanislaw Przybszewski 1898 S105
crayon and scraper 54.2 x 43.7

51 Inheritance 1897/99
chinese ink and crayon 44.0 x 30.5

52 Ashes 1899 S120
chinese ink, crayon and scraper 35.3 x 45.4

Cat. no. **52**

53 Good evening, good evening 1899 S121
40.0 x 52.5

54 Woman 1899 S122
chinese ink, crayon and scraper 46.2 x 59.2

55 Flight c.1899/1900
42.0 x 30.0

56 Portrait of Holger Drachmann 1901 S141
chinese ink and crayon 58.6 x 44.8

57 Nude figure 1901 S142
three colours 49.5 x 39.6

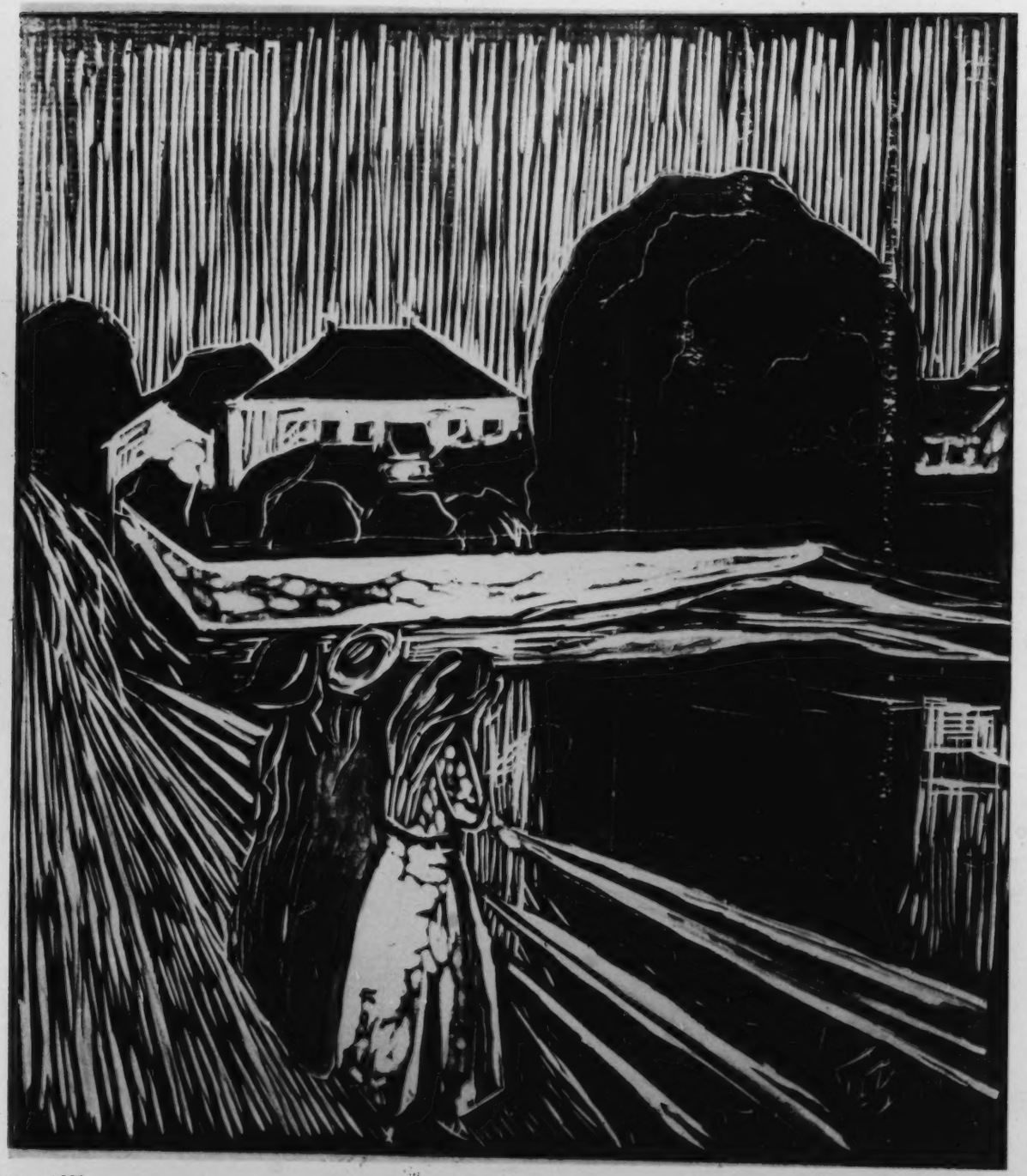
58 Male nude 1902 S161
48.3 x 36.5

59 Henrik Ibsen in the Grand Hotel café 1902 S171
crayon and scraper 42.0 x 59.0

60 The violin concerto 1903 S211
crayon and chinese ink c.48.0 x 56.0

61 Woman with a brooch 1903 S212
crayon and chinese ink c.60.0 x 46.0

Cat. no. **83**



Cat. no. **101**

62 Berlin girl 1906 S253
two colours 41.0 x 31.0

63 Nude in interior 1907
39.5 x 36.0

64 Self portrait with a cigarette 1908/9 S282
56.0 x 45.5

65 Snow shovellers 1912 S385b
lithograph and woodcut 64.5 x 50.0

66 The tiger tamer Savade 1916 S457
48.7 x 63.5

67 A workman digging 1920 S484
43.5 x 56.5

68 Self portrait with wine bottle 1925/6
42.5 x 50.5

69 Portrait of Professor Schreiner 1930
two colours 60.0 x 52.0

Woodcuts

70 Vampire 1895 S34
woodcut and lithograph six colours 38.2 x 54.5

71 Anxiety 1896 S62
two colours 46.0 x 37.7

72 Man's head in woman's hair 1896 S80
four colours; design for a book cover. 54.6 x 38.1

73 Evening: (Melancholy on the shore) 1896 S82
three colours 37.6 x 45.5

74 In the man's brain 1897 S98
37.2 x 56.7

75 Female nude 1897 S99
41.5 x 31.6

76 In the forest 1897 S100b
Printed by Lemercier, Paris 49.5 x 56.5

77 In the forest 1897 S100
Printed by Kunstlers, Berlin 49.5 x 56.5

78 The kiss 1897/8 S102a
Probably printed by Lemercier, Paris 59.1 x 45.7

79 The kiss 1902 S102d
Printed by Lassaly, Berlin 44.7 x 44.7

80 Salome-Paraphrase 1898 S109
40.0 x 25.0

81 Fertility 1898 S110
42.5 x 51.7

82 Hemanthus 1898 S114
Title page drawing c.46.5 x 33.0

83 Winter landscape 1898 S118
31.8 x 45.8

84 Old fisherman 1899 S124
43.5 x 35.5

85 Seascape 1899 S125
two colours 37.2 x 57.2

86 Bathing boys 1899 S127
three colours 35.9 x 44.0

87 Bathing girl 1899 S128
42.5 x 51.8

88 Girl's head against the shore 1899 S129
five colours 46.5 x 41.3

89 Man and woman 1899 S132
42.0 x 51.0

90 Two people (The lonely ones) 1899 S133
two colours 39.5 x 53.0

91 Two people (The lonely ones) 1899 S133
four colours 39.5 x 53.0

92 Kneeling woman 1899
52.0 x 42.0

93 Moonlight 1901 S81b
three colours 46.3 x 47.0

94 Evening (Melancholy on the shore) 1901 S144
four colours 38.5 x 45.0

95 Old man praying 1902 S228
two colours 45.8 x 32.5

96 Man and woman kissing 1905 S230
three colours 40.0 x 54.0

97 Old men and boys 1905 S235
35.0 x 44.0

98 Workman in the snow 1911 S350
60.0 x 49.5

99 Sunbather 1915 S440b
five colours 35.1 x 56.6

100 Lovers in the pine woods 1915 S442
four colours 32.0 x 60.0

101 Girls on the bridge 1920 S488b
woodcut and colour lithograph four colours 49.6 x 42.9

102 The trial by fire 1927/31
46.0 x 37.5

103 Birgitte 1931
two colours 60.0 x 32.0

104 The cobweb 1943
52.0 x 42.0

Shenval Press

Edvard